GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5194
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2003
RESTRICTIONS ON INDIAN SEAFOOD
GULAM MEHMOOD BANATWALLA

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the continued crisis being faced by the sea-food products industry consequent to stringent conditions imposed by the international community particularly by the European Union;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to solve the problem;

(d) whether the Government propose to set up an appropriate Committee to interact from time to time with the international community on problems arising from impositions of regulations made with respect to sea-food products; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Consequent on the detection of the antibiotic residues in a number of consignments exported from India, the European Commission (EC) proposed in September 2002 to put India on red alert i.e., 100% testing of consignments for the presence of the banned antibiotics. However, the Government took a series of measures through the Embassies in the European Union member states and the EC agreed to postpone the decision.

(c) Government have taken a number of steps to eliminate the incidence of rejection of consignments of fish & fishery products on account of microbiological & chemical contamination, which include, laying down the essential requirements for hygienic handling of seafood at all stages of production, storage and transport to ensure effective compliance of the quality standards; prescribing the maximum permissible level of chemicals and heavy metals; monitoring by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and the Export Inspection Council of India (EIC) of the processing units to ensure that required standards are followed campaign by MPEDA and other Government agencies in all seafood producing areas to bring quality awareness among the exporters, processors, farmers, feed manufacturers, hatchery owners, etc. and to dissuade them not to use the banned chemicals at any stage; setting up/upgradation of laboratories for the purpose of testing of seafood at major production centers and improvement/modernization of fish landing centres and fishing harbours.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) India has already taken up the issues with E.U. in the Joint Working Group meetings. The issues are also taken up bilaterally with member countries of E.U. through our Embassies.